

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1 1. A method for deleting automatic delegate reply messages, comprising:  
2 receiving a delegate reply message provided in response to a sent electronic mail  
3 message to at least one recipient terminal; and  
4 deleting the opened delegate reply message.
  
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2 deleting other delegate reply messages provided in response to the same sent electronic  
3 mail message if the other automatic delegate reply messages have substantially the same  
4 message identifier as the opened delegate reply message.
  
- 1 3. A computer readable medium for storing a software program that, when executed  
2 by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for automatically deleting  
3 delegate reply messages, the method comprising:  
4 transmitting an electronic mail message to at least one recipient;  
5 receiving a delegate reply message provided in response to the electronic mail  
6 message;  
7 identifying a related delegate reply message; and  
8 automatically deleting the related delegate reply message.
  
- 1 4. The computer program product of claim 3, wherein the method further comprises:  
2 transmitting the electronic mail message to a plurality of recipients;  
3 receiving a first delegate reply message from the plurality of recipients; and  
4 receiving a second delegate reply message from the plurality of recipients.
  
- 1 5. The computer program product of claim 4, wherein the electronic mail message is  
2 associated with a mail message identifier.
  
- 1 6. The computer program product of claim 5, wherein the first delegate reply message  
2 and the second delegate reply message are associated with the mail message identifier.

1       7.     The computer program product of claim 6, wherein the method further comprises  
2     comparing the mail message identifier associated with the first delegate reply message to  
3     the mail message identifier associated with the second delegate reply message.

1       8.     The computer program product of claim 7, wherein the mail message identifier  
2     comprises sender and timestamp information for the electronic mail message.

1       9.     The computer program product of claim 7, wherein the mail message identifier  
2     comprises at least one of the identity of the sender of the electronic mail message, a date on  
3     which the electronic mail message was sent, a time at which the electronic mail message  
4     was sent, and an identity of the terminal from which the electronic mail message was sent.

1       10.    The computer program product of claim 3, wherein the method further comprises  
2     receiving a selection to automatically delete related delegate reply messages.

1       11.    The computer program product of claim 10, further comprising deleting the  
2     delegate reply message

1       12.    The computer program product of claim 3, wherein the method further comprises:  
2     receiving an electronic message; and  
3     determining whether the electronic message is a delegate reply message.

1       13.    The computer program product of claim 3, wherein the method further comprises:  
2     determining whether another of the at least one recipients has sent a second  
3     delegate reply message in response to the electronic mail message.

1       14.    The computer readable medium of claim 3, wherein the method further comprises:  
2     deleting other delegate reply messages provided in response to the same sent  
3     electronic mail message if the other automatic delegate reply messages have substantially  
4     the same message identifier as the opened delegate reply message.

- 1        15. A computer readable medium for storing a software program that, when executed
- 2        by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method comprising:
- 3                receiving a delegate reply message provided in response to a sent electronic mail
- 4        message to at least one recipient terminal; and
- 5                deleting the opened delegate reply message.
  
- 1        16. The computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising:
- 2                deleting other delegate reply messages provided in response to the same sent
- 3        electronic mail message if the other automatic delegate reply messages have substantially
- 4        the same message identifier as the opened delegate reply message.